

Grave concern over the synodal process? Yes, there should be!

Father Enoch

Peter Dai Bui, Auxiliary Bishop of Phoenix, AZ, maintains that the faithful have nothing to fear from the implementation of the *Final Document* of the Synod on Synodality, given that “synodality” is nothing other than people “walking alongside” and “listening to” one another.

If the goals of synodality were this simple, direct and honest, I never would have penned *The Trojan Horse in the Catholic Church*,[\[1\]](#) which offers an in-depth critique of the Synod’s *Final Document* (FD), and includes statements by Popes Francis and Leo, as well as that of various cardinals, bishops and priests who were helped direct the course of the Synod and its major work product, the FD.

Bishop Bui questions the veracity of the author of the book’s foreword, identifying him only as a “senior churchman.” It seems odd that he refused to name him: Gerhard Cardinal Müller, former Prefect of the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith, who attended every meeting of both sessions of the Synod (2023 and 2024), who astutely observed that the “synodal process” (as it’s called) was used at the Synod and will be used in the now-ongoing implementation process (2025-2028) “as a means to undermine the hierarchical-sacramental structure of the Church and replace it with an ‘inverted pyramid’ of governance.” Müller also stressed that “all of these so-called synodal reflections are aimed at preparing us to accept homosexuality.”

Bishop Bui attempts to undermine Cardinal Müller’s observations and his warnings, saying that “over 300 voices were in those assemblies” at the Synod, and suggests that his one voice does not reflect what others observed.

But Cardinal Müller was not the only prelate who recognizes the insidious machinations of the synodal process. Even before the first session of the Synod on Synodality (October 2023), Raymond Cardinal Burke, former head of the Supreme Tribunal of the Apostolic Signatura (the Church’s highest judicial authority), who had studied the preparations for the Synod, pointed out that the term synodal “has no history in the doctrine of the Church” and has “no reasonable definition. Synodality and its adjective, synodal, have become slogans behind which a revolution is at work to change radically the Church’s self-understanding, in accord with a contemporary ideology which denies much of what the Church has always taught and practiced.”[\[2\]](#)

And on October 3, 2023, the day prior to the opening of the first session of the Synod, Cardinal Burke delivered an address at an international conference in Rome in which he stressed that in its canonical tradition

the Church is not described as synodal but, instead, as *hierarchical communion* (cf. LG 25). It is the pastors [bishops] in the communion safeguarded and fostered by the Petrine Office, i.e., the hierarchy, who have the responsibility for the doctrinal, liturgical, and moral guidance of the Church. The Synod is an aid offered to the pastors so that they can fulfill their service. It never replaces and cannot replace the pastoral office willed and instituted by Christ Himself.[\[3\]](#)

In his address, Burke went on say that the clear intention of the Synod on Synodality “is to profoundly change the hierarchical constitution of the Church.”

Are these two respected prelates just imagining dangers? No; for Pope Francis himself, in his October 17, 2015 address commemorating the 50th anniversary of the institution of the Synod of Bishops by

Pope Paul VI, used this occasion to roll out his plan to fundamentally change the hierarchical structure of the Church. He referred to it as “an inverted pyramid” in which “the top is located beneath the base. Consequently,” he said, “those who exercise authority are called ‘ministers,’ because, in the original meaning of the word, they are the least of all.”

Bishop Bui maintains that by using the term “inverted pyramid” Pope Francis is merely looking at the hierarchical structure of the Church from a different perspective; that the synodal process will not usher in “a new governance structure”; rather, “walking with” and “listening to” the laity will enable bishops and priests to better serve their flocks “in a manner conformed to Christ,” who said, “Whoever would be great among you must be your servant.”

Ah, would that the synodal process were so simple, straightforward and innocent. But as I point out in *The Trojan Horse*, reality is much different.

Pope Francis, in his October 2, 2024 address to the second session of the Synod on Synodality, outlined the new “synodal paradigm.” Traditionally, only bishops gathered at synods where they as successors to the Apostles offered advice to popes on a topic chosen by the pope. But Pope Francis broke with this tradition by introducing a synodal process that includes changing “the ways that the ministry of Pastors, and Bishops in particular, is exercised.” In addition to bishops, he intentionally chose “to convene as full members” of the Synod on Synodality a “significant number of lay and consecrated persons (men and women), deacons and priests,” his reason being that the bishop “cannot carry out his ministry except within the People of God and with the People of God, preceding, standing in the midst of, and *following* that portion of God’s People entrusted to his care” (emphasis added).

The bishop, the shepherd of his flock within his diocese, who as a successor to the Apostles has the charism of teaching, governing and sanctifying given by Christ, must *follow* the lay faithful entrusted to his care? The FD elaborates on this strange concept.

Under the heading “Together for Mission” the FD no. 77 calls for “increased participation of laymen and laywomen in the Church discernment processes and all phases of decision-making processes (drafting, making and confirming decisions)”; and FD no. 87 dictates: “In the synodal Church the whole community . . . is called together to pray, listen, analyze, dialogue, discern and offer advice on taking pastoral decisions”; that this process is “essential to the Church’s mission, requiring discernment, the reaching of consensus, and decision-making through the use of various structures and institutions of synodality.”

However, for bishops in dioceses (and by extension, priests in parishes) to “serve” the flock does not and cannot mean to be subject and obedient to some group consensus that does not possess authority given to it by Christ – again, to teach, govern and sanctify.

Practically, what will this look like in dioceses and parishes? The bishop or pastor will not be able to draft or make decisions on any matter without first consulting the laity? And after consultation, make decisions only after having reached a “consensus” in democratic fashion? Such a process will usher in a bureaucratic nightmare for both dioceses and parishes. Besides, the Church’s canon law already provides for bishops and pastors to listen to and take advice; e.g., in parishes, pastors seek advice from both finance and pastoral councils; but these are consultative bodies, not deliberative; their advice cannot bind the pastor – though it appears that the FD intends to change this, for it speaks of “the goal of shared decision-making” (FD no. 89; cf. no. 92).

Cardinal Mario Grech, Secretary General of the Synod on Synodality, in a March 4, 2021 address to the

Bishops of Ireland on the topic of synodality, elaborated on Pope Francis' vision of the Church in which the hierarchical authority of bishops is inverted, and what this means in practical terms: "Pope Francis tacitly communicates the style of primacy which he has called for in his key speech on synodality in 2015," said Grech; he "has provided a lively and inspiring model of the image of the 'inverted pyramid' of the hierarchical authority." After quoting Francis' words Grech went on to tell the bishops of Ireland:

As Amanda C. Osheim rightly observes: "conceiving of hierarchical authority as an inverted pyramid reverses an older pyramidal conception of the church, a trickle-down ecclesial economy in which the Holy Spirit was given first to the pope and bishops, then to clergy and religious, and finally to the faithful. . . . This pyramid effectively divided the Church into the teaching Church (*ecclesia docens*) and the learning Church (*ecclesia discens*). *By inverting the pyramid, Francis' analogy recasts authority as being dependent upon reception – listening to and learning from others – within the church*" (emphasis added in italics and bold).^[4]

As I point out in *The Trojan Horse*, one can get an in-depth glimpse of how the synodal process will play out in dioceses throughout the world by looking to Germany which began its "Synodal Way" back in March of 2019, when the German bishops met in assembly. At that time Reinhard Cardinal Marx, then president of the German bishops' conference, called for a "binding synodal process" (read here: a process of democratic decision-making) regarding key issues such as priestly celibacy, the Church's teaching on sexual morality, and "the necessary reduction of [clerical] power."^[5]

On March 14, the last day of their assembly, after the bishops committed to a "synodal process," Cardinal Marx told reporters that "the majority of bishops" agreed that there is "a need for change" in the Church's teaching regarding sexual morality; and that at the end of their synodal process the German bishops would send a letter to Rome, thereby introducing to the universal Church the themes they discussed.^[6]

Fast forward three years: During the fourth Assembly of the German Synodal Way, held on September 8-10, 2022, 71 percent of German bishops voted along with a large majority of laity in favor of the document, "Magisterial reassessment of Homosexuality," which includes following text: "Same-sex sexuality – also realized in sexual acts – is thus not a sin that separates from God, and it is not to be judged as intrinsically evil." The document also calls for a change in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church's* teaching on homosexuality and chastity in passages 2357-2359 and 2396.^[7]

Fast forward another few years: In January, 2026 the Central Committee of German Catholics (a lay body whose members represent different organizations) demanded not only that the laity be placed on an equal level as the bishops in matters of Church governance (especially financial control), but also that it be granted "decision-making power and be able to introduce changes to doctrine by majority vote."^[8]

On February 24, 2026 the German Bishops Conference announced that it adopted statutes for a "Synodal Conference" (a continuation of the German "Synodal Way") which would allow for bishops, other clergy and laity to "discuss and decide on ecclesiastical matters together";^[9] and on March 31 the German bishops submitted these statutes to the Vatican for approval.^[10]

So, the German bishops agree to undermine their own episcopal authority by placing it on the level of the laity – thus discarding the hierarchical structure of the Church as instituted by Jesus and replacing it

with an inverted pyramid model, a model that will pave the way for the overturning of moral order via democratic decision-making – all in the name of synodality!

The Synod's *Final Document* lays out the pathway for the Church at large to follow in the wake of the German Synodal Way; in effect, the proverbial Rhine flowing into the Tiber.

Bishop Bui asserts that, "The bishop who listens is not a weaker bishop. He is a more Christ-like bishop." I heartily agree.

But the bishop who undermines his own authority via the synodal process of "walking with" and "listening to" others is *not* more Christ-like; for as *Lumen Gentium* teaches, "bishops, the successors to the Apostles, together with the successor of Peter, the visible Head of the whole Church, govern the house of the living God" (LG 18); for they "by divine institution have succeeded to the place of the apostles, as shepherds of the Church, and he who hears them, hears Christ, and he who rejects them, rejects Christ and Him who sent Christ" (LG 20); "In matters of faith and morals, the bishops speak in the name of Christ and the faithful are to accept their teaching and adhere to it with religious assent" (LG 25).

I believe Our Lord is greatly distressed, and heartbroken at seeing weak, faithless shepherds attempting re-make His glorious Bride into a human entity that bows to the diabolic agenda of the New World Order.

[1] Father Enoch, *The Trojan Horse in the Catholic Church, Synod on Synodality: The Attempt to Invert the Bride of Christ's Hierarchy and Moral Order* (Phoenix, AZ: Catholics for Catholics, 2025).

[2] See foreword, xi, in José Antonio Ureta and Julio Loredó de Iczue, *The Synodal Process is a Pandora's Box: 100 Questions & Answers* (Spring Grove, PA: The American Society for the Defense of Tradition, Family, and Property, 2023).

[3] "Synodality Versus True Identity of the Church as Hierarchical Communion," delivered at The New Daily Compass International Conference "The Synodal Babel," sponsored by the staff of *La Nuova Fossola Quotidiana*; avail. at <https://cardinalburke.com/presentations/synodality-vs-true-identity-2/>; also avail. at <https://www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/view.cfm?recnum=12728>. The Cardinal

also made mention of the fact that he, along with four other cardinals, Walter Brandmüller, Juan Scandoval Íñiguez, Robert Sarah and Joseph Zen, submitted *dubia* (questions) to Pope Francis in the summer of that year (2023) seeking “to clarify a number of fundamental points pertaining to the Deposit of Faith which are being questioned today, especially in the pursuit of so-called synodality.”

[4] <https://www.catholicbishops.ie/2021/02/03/address-of-cardinal-mario-grech-to-the-bishops-of-ireland-on-synodality/>.

[5] “German bishops announce ‘synodal process’ on celibacy, sexual morality,” *Catholic News Agency* (March 14, 2019); avail. at <https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/40810/german-bishops-announce-synodal-process-on-celibacy-sexual-morality>.

[6] Ibid.

[7] Andreas Wailzer, “German Synodal Way approves text calling homosexual acts ‘not sinful’ and ‘not intrinsically evil’,” *LifeSiteNews* (Sept. 12, 2022); avail. at <https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/german-synodal-way-approves-text-calling-homosexual-acts-not-sinful-and-not-intrinsically-evil/>.

[8] Doug Mainwaring, “Schism fears arise as Catholic Church in Germany aims to put laity on ‘same level’ as bishops,” *LifeSiteNews* (Jan. 17, 2026); avail. at https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/schism-fears-arise-as-catholic-church-in-germany-aims-to-put-laity-on-same-level-as-bishops/?utm_source=most_recent&utm_campaign=usa

[9] Andreas Wailzer, “German bishops adopt text of ‘Synodal Conference’ seeking to give Church authority to laity,” *LifeSiteNews* (Feb. 25, 2026); avail. at <https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/german-bishops-adopt-text-of-synodal-conference-seeking-to-give-church-authority-to-laity/>.

[10] Andreas Wailzer, “German bishops submit lay governance proposals to Vatican,” *LifeSiteNews* (April 1, 2026); avail. at <https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/german-bishops-submit-lay-governance-proposals-to-vatican/>.